

Application No: 20/3627M

Location: ALMA MILL, CROMPTON ROAD, MACCLESFIELD,
CHESHIRE

Proposal: Change of use and extensions to vacant mill into 24 self-contained apartments with associated car parking.

Applicant: Mujahid Afzal

Expiry Date: 19-Nov-2020

SUMMARY:

Alma Mill is a Grade II Listed Building which has been vacant for a long period of time and is in a very poor state of repair. It is accepted that, in order to carry out residential conversion, significant works are required, which would be extremely costly.

The principle of the development is accepted and an alternative use other than employment has been justified. Furthermore, it is considered that there is a real public benefit in facilitating the long-term future of Alma Mill. This is given substantial weight in support of the scheme.

However, the harm caused by failing to provide suitable mitigation for affordable housing, education and open space is given substantial weight against the scheme. The lower parking provision and negative impact on neighbouring living conditions are also given significant weight against the scheme.

The harm to the listed building, setting of the adjacent listed building and the character of the area are given significant weight against the scheme also.

It is considered that the substantial benefit of bringing the listed building into use, (after such a considerable amount of time) thereby helping to sustain its future, is outweighed by the negative impacts of the scheme, namely the lack of developer contributions, limited parking provision, impact on neighbouring living conditions and harm to the listed building, setting of the adjacent listed building and character of the area, on this occasion.

Having taken account of all matters raised, the scheme is contrary to the relevant Development Plan Policies for the reasons set out above and it is recommended that this application is refused.

RECOMMENDATION:

REFUSE

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

Alma Mill is located on the corner of Crompton Road and Pownall Square, approximately 0.6 miles to the west of Macclesfield Train Station. The total site area comprises 560sqm.

Originally constructed as a silk mill in the 19th century, the grade II listed building is situated within a predominantly residential area. The front elevation of the building is set back from Crompton Road.

The building has been vacant for some years and is in a very poor state of repair. It has suffered from settlement across the foundations, water ingress and partial collapse of internal floor structures and is therefore not structurally sound. The site lies within a Mixed Use Employment Area as designated in the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

Full planning permission is sought to convert the Mill into 24 apartments comprising of 20 one-bedroom apartments and 4 two-bedroom apartments. The scheme also includes a two-storey roof extension and a full height rear extension.

The existing walls and windows will be retained and repaired whenever possible, retaining the original features and form of the mill. The entrance off Crompton Road would be maintained and the original hoist beam and void restored.

The proposal would structurally strengthen the mill building using an internal steel frame and restore the original building materials.

The design would incorporate the provision of four car parking spaces, short term cycle spaces and plant, bin and cycle stores at basement level.

RELEVANT HISTORY

08/0788P - Change of use of existing vacant mill into twelve self-contained apartments and associated garaging
Approved 16 June 2008

06/2775P - Conversion of mill to 12no. self-contained apartments with associated basement level car parking (listed building consent)
Withdrawn 07.12.06

06/2774P - Conversion of mill to 12no. self-contained apartments with associated basement level car parking (full planning)
Withdrawn 07.12.06

06/0370P - Conversion of mill to 12no. self-contained apartments with basement level car parking (full planning)
refused 19.04.06

06/0369P - Conversion of mill to 12 no. self-contained apartments with basement level car parking (listed building consent)
refused 19.04.06

05/1288P - Conversion of mill to 12no. self-contained apartments with basement level car parking (full planning)
Withdrawn 06.07.05

05/1287P - Conversion of mill to 12no. self-contained apartments with basement level car parking (full planning)
Withdrawn 04.07.05

76718P – Change of use of basement to storage area & rehearsal studio,
approved 16.3.94.

69958P – Renovation of top floor to provide artist’s studio and classroom area, approved 18.3.92.

POLICIES

By virtue of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the application should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

For the purposes of considering the current proposals, the development plan consists of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS) and saved policies Macclesfield Borough Local Plan (MBLP).

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS)

CELPS was adopted in July 2017 and sets out policies to guide development across the borough over the plan period to 2030. The relevant policies of the CELPS are summarised below:

MP 1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
PG 1	Overall Development Strategy;
SD 1	Sustainable Development in Cheshire East;
SD 2	Sustainable Development Principles;
IN 1	Infrastructure;
IN 2	Developer Contributions;
EG 3	Existing and Allocated employment Sites;
SC 5	Affordable Homes;
SE 1	Design;
SE 2	Efficient Use of Land;
SE 6	Green Infrastructure;
SE 7	The Historic Environment;

SE 12 Pollution, Land Contamination and Land Stability;
SE 13 Flood Risk and Water Management;
CO 1 Sustainable Travel and Transport;
CO 4 Travel Plans and Transport Assessments; and
Annex C Parking Standards.

Macclesfield Borough Local Plan saved policies (MBLP):

Following the adoption of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy, a number of policies of the MBLP have been saved. The relevant saved policies are summarised below:

NE 11 Nature Conservation;
BE 15 Repair or enhancement (listed buildings);
BE 17 Demolition of listed buildings;
BE 18 Alteration extensions and partial demolition (listed buildings);
BE 19 Change if use of buildings;
H 9 Occupation of Affordable Housing;
DC 2 Design and Amenity – Extensions and Alterations;
DC 3 Design and Amenity – Amenity;
DC 6 Design and Amenity – Circulation and Access;
DC 8 Design and Amenity – Landscaping;
DC 9 Design and Amenity – Tree Protection; and
DC 14 Design and Amenity – Noise
E11 Mixed Use Areas

Other Material Considerations:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Framework (NPPG)
The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide (2017)
Cheshire East Parking Standards - Guidance Note

CONSULTATIONS (External to planning)

Environmental Protection Unit (EPU):

The Council's Environmental Health Section has raised no objections to the application subject to the imposition of conditions relating to;

- The provision of electric car charging points, provision of ultra-emission boilers
- The submission of a travel information pack, the submission of a dust management plan and the restrictions on the hours of construction; and
- The submission of a risk assessment and ground investigation survey, remediation report and conditions covering the importation of soil and if any unexpected contamination is found.

CE Strategic Infrastructure (Highways):

No Objections, subject to the implementation of travel plan measures.

United Utilities:

No comments received to date. If comments are received, these will be reported to members of the Northern Planning Committee in the form of written or verbal updates.

CE Strategic Housing:

This is a proposed development of 24 dwellings therefore in order to meet the Council's Policy on Affordable Housing there is a requirement for 7 dwellings to be provided as affordable dwellings.

CE Children's Services (Education):

This proposed development would require a total education contribution of £32,685 to offset the resultant anticipated impact upon local secondary schools.

CE Greenspace:

This proposed development would require a total greenspace contribution of £105,000 to account for the increased demand upon existing infrastructure.

Macclesfield Civic Trust:

"The Civic Society welcomes the conversion of historic buildings to new uses which can secure their future - often this requires a derogation from normal planning requirements such as car parking or space standards - a good example being the fairly recent conversion of Brown Street Mill which has no on-site car parking.

We are concerned in this case that although some relaxation of car parking requirements have to be accepted it does not seem assured that prospective occupiers and their visitors will only use bicycles or public transport or walk. Therefore, we consider the transport assessment a little light on logic. The locality is one where there is extensive on-street parking because of the pattern of built development - the scheme may well increase this.

We note that from the viability assessment the scheme will give a profitable return to the developer but possibly dependent upon the provision of the additional upper floors - and this is the problem.

What is the impact upon the integrity and appearance of the Listed Building and the visual impact on the surrounding townscape?

We are concerned that the additional height and use of metal cladding would not only alter the character of the building but also create a feature of unwelcome prominence in the locality - visible along Crompton road and from nearby residential areas.

In view of this the society cannot support the present scheme but do support the efforts to bring the building back into beneficial use. Perhaps a more modest conversion could still be viable whilst respecting the integrity of the Grade II Listed Building.”

Macclesfield Town Council:

“That the committee does not support this application in its current form and sought the following conditions are made on the application:

- i. Hours of construction are set,*
- ii. Materials used are in keeping with the area with particular reference to the design of the top storey,*
- iii. The apartments are fitted with low emission boilers,*
- iv. Provision is made for all apartments to access waste collection including recycling,*
- v. Sprinklers are included in the design,*
- vi. Electric charging points for vehicles and bicycles are included in the design.”*

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

Representations from nine properties have been received. A summary of the comments is shown below:

- The building represents a serious health and safety concern
- The development would exacerbate the existing car parking issues in the area
- The additional floors would negatively impact on the adjacent listed Crompton Mill

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development:

The planning history shows the surrounding premises have a long-established history of commercial uses operating. The site is identified as being within an established mixed-use employment site as identified in the Local Plan.

Policy EG 3 of the CELPS sets out how existing employment sites should be protected for employment use. However, in certain circumstances, for example where the site is no longer viable for employment use and without

potential for alternative employment use, alternative uses are allowable subject to meeting sustainable development objectives.

There is a lengthy history of applications for the conversion of the mill where insufficient evidence was submitted to demonstrate that residential re-use was the only viable and appropriate means of securing the future of the building. The principle of conversion was accepted in the last approved application following a marketing exercise and the additional deterioration and lack of use since that application strengthens the case for residential being the only viable use of the building.

Given the above, the age and state of the building, it is considered appropriate to accept that Alma Mill is not viable for employment uses and meets the requirements of Policy EG 3 of the CELPS. This assessment is consistent with the previous decision that the Local Planning Authority made on the site in 2008 to approved its conversion to 12 self-contained apartments (planning ref; 08/0788P refers).

The principle of the development to convert the mill to residential use is therefore deemed to be acceptable.

Residential Mix

Policy SC 4 of the Cheshire East Local Plan states that *“New residential development should maintain, provide or contribute to a mix of housing tenures, types and sizes to help support the creation of mixed, balanced and inclusive communities”*. The mix of one and two bed apartments located within a residential area would contribute to the mix of housing sizes and types and would complement the existing provision within the area.

Designated Heritage Assets

Our historic environment is a finite resource and an integral part of the unique character and distinctiveness of Cheshire East. Key assets include Macclesfield's silk and industrial heritage.

Paragraph 183 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that heritage assets *‘...are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations’*.

Consequently, it is important to the long-term well-being of the borough that there is positive stewardship of its built heritage and that its conservation and management are key priorities in the future place-shaping in Cheshire East.

Alma Mill is a Grade II Listed Building. Originally built as a silk weaving mill in 1823, with early c20 additions. Listed Building Consent 20/3628M accompanies this application.

The Mill has previously received permission for residential conversion, albeit a smaller number of units (12) confined to the existing fabric of the building. This application seeks to increase the number of units which is necessary, according to the applicant, to make the scheme viable. This is achieved by adding a two-storey extension on the roof and seven-storey extension to the rear.

The new additions would inevitably cause harm to the character of the listed building due to the prominence and scale. It is claimed that these changes are necessary in order to make the development viable. The Council's Conservation Officer originally confirmed that the harm could be justified by allowing the building to be retained in a form which can still be identified as the original Alma Mill building. However, due to the condition of the mill there would be nothing retained internally, a steel frame would be inserted internally to support the walls and floors, the roof would be removed and substantial rebuilding would take place, resulting in very little of the original building remaining. Following a re-examination of the information provided, the Council's Conservation Officer confirms that the harm 'should be towards significant harm'.

The application site also lies adjacent to a further grade II listed former mill building, Crompton Road Mill, which is a similar scale to the application property at three storeys on the elevation facing Crompton Road.

Paragraph 196 of the NPPF states that *'where the development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed building including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'* The scheme must also pay special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed buildings and their setting including the features of special architectural or historic interest in line with s66 of the Planning and Listed Buildings Act.

The extension on the roof would increase the height above the road from the existing height of approx. 11.5m to a height of 15.8m, a significant increase of 4.3m, which extends to an increased height of 6.3m when viewed from the side. This increase would be visible along Crompton Road when travelling from the north and south dominating the listed Alma Mill and the setting of the adjoining listed 'Crompton Road Mill'.

It is considered that the extensions would be an unacceptable form of development, which does not respect the existing architectural features of the building and is not sympathetic to the character of the locality, the adjacent building and the site itself. Although the proposal would retain the shell of the listed building and hence some of the historical fabric, the extent of the extensions would detract from the historic character of the listed building and would also harm the setting of the adjacent listed building.

It is considered under S66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and paragraph 196 of the NPPF that the proposal does not preserve the setting of the listed buildings and has

substantial harm to the setting of the grade II listed Alma Mill, and to the setting of the grade II listed Crompton Road Mill. It is considered that this harm would outweigh any benefits of retaining the shell of the application property.

A viability statement has been submitted assessing the different options for converting the mill and explaining why the proposed option is the only viable route for the retention of the building. This has not been independently verified, however, for the reasons stated above the proposal would have a negative impact on the listed building and surrounding area and therefore any viability case would not appear to be sufficient to outweigh this harm to the designated heritage assets.

The scheme is therefore deemed to be contrary to saved Policies BE15, BE17, BE18 and BE19 of MBLP and SE 7 of the CELPS.

Design

NPPF paragraph 127 notes that planning decisions should ensure that developments are: visually attractive as a result of good architecture and layout; are sympathetic to local character and history, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change; establish or maintain a strong sense of place, and create attractive and distinctive places to live, work and visit. Paragraph 130 notes that permission should be refused for poor design that fails to take the opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area.

Local Policy SD 2 notes that development will be expected to contribute positively to an area's character and identity, creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness in terms of height, scale, form and grouping, choice of materials, external design features, massing of development, and relationship to neighbouring properties, street scene and the wider neighbourhood. Policy SE 1 notes that development proposals should make a positive contribution to their surroundings by:

- Ensuring design solutions achieve a sense of place by protecting and enhancing the quality, distinctiveness and character of settlements
- Encouraging innovative and creative design solutions that are appropriate to the local context

The creation of the additional accommodation on the roof of the mill building would be visible, particularly when approaching along Crompton Road from the north. This would be less visible when approaching from the south due to the adjoining Crompton Mill screening most views. However, the height would be significantly greater than the similarly scaled adjacent Crompton Road Mill.

The prominence of the extension and scale would create a dominant form of development out of character with the existing building and surrounding area. Consequently, it would be contrary to CELPS Policies SD 2 and SE 1.

Amenity

Saved Macclesfield Borough Local Plan Policy DC3 seeks to ensure development does not significantly injure the amenities of adjoining or nearby residential properties through a loss of light, overbearing effect or loss of sunlight/daylight with guidance on space distances between buildings contained in saved Policy DC38 of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan and guidance within the Cheshire East Design Guide.

Privacy, overlooking and loss of light:

New residential developments should generally achieve a distance of between 21m and 25m between principal windows and 13m to 14m between a principal window and a blank elevation. This is required to maintain an adequate standard of privacy and amenity between residential properties and these are set out in Policy DC38. The policy includes provisions to increase these distances in circumstances when development exceeds two-stories in height. In the case of three storey properties, this is increased to 28 and 32 metres between principal windows and 16.5 metres between a principal window and a blank / flank elevation and in the case of additional storeys, 2.5 metres is added per storey.

It should also be noted that the Cheshire East Design Guide SPD also includes reference to separation distances and states that separation distances should be seen as a guide rather than a hard and fast rule.

The Design Guide identifies the following separation distances:

- 21 metres for typical rear separation distance
- 18 metres for typical frontage separation distance
- 12 metres for reduced frontage separation distance (minimum)

The building is positioned approx. 10m from the front of number 1 Pownall Square. The main windows facing onto number 1 would serve the living room of each apartment. These would be secondary windows with another window to these rooms facing onto Crompton Road. In order to prevent overlooking of this property, it is considered reasonable to condition the side facing windows of the ground floor, basement, 1st and 2nd floors to contain obscurely glazed windows.

Due to the offset nature of the other side facing windows to number 1 it is not considered necessary to obscurely glaze these windows. However, there would be some loss of light to the first floor bedroom windows from the proposed roof extension which would also have an overbearing impact. This is particularly pronounced considering the orientation of the application building which is to the south of the properties on Pownall Square.

To the front the mill building is approx. 20m from the front elevation of the properties opposite.

With the proposed condition it is not considered that the development, namely the proposed extension, would result in a significant loss of privacy to neighbouring properties, however considering the orientation of the application site, in relation to properties on Pownall Square there would be a loss of light and overbearing impact on these dwellings contrary to policies MBLP DC3, DC38 and CELPS SE 1.

Future Occupants:

The level of amenity enjoyed within the proposed development in terms of the amount of living accommodation within each flat is considered acceptable and would meet the National Technical Housing Standards. It is also considered that the proposed flats would benefit from sufficient natural light.

The site has no formal garden area or communal area, but this is due to existing constraints.

There is sufficient storage for refuse bins and cycle storage.

Noise and Vibration:

Concerns were raised in relation to the location of the building lying within a Mixed-Use Area. MBLP Policy E11 indicates that within such areas a range of uses may be permitted. This includes housing when a satisfactory housing environment can be created. In the case of this site the neighbouring mill building has a number of commercial activities which may cause problems for a nearby residential use. In order to address this relationship, the architect has positioned the corridor access ways on the side of the building which faces away from the adjacent commercial building, which should reduce the impact on residential amenity of the new residents. No objections have been raised from the Environmental Health Officer. On balance it is considered that the architect has overcome this potential unneighbourly relationship with the proposed internal layout.

Contamination:

The application area has a history of mill use and therefore the land may be contaminated. The application is for new residential properties which are a sensitive end use and could be affected by any contamination present or brought onto the site. Therefore, the Council's Environmental Health Officer recommends conditions to ensure ground investigations are undertaken and any remediation is in place prior to occupation.

Highway Access and Parking

The applicant has submitted a Highways Note in response to the points raised in the initial comments made by the Strategic Infrastructure Manager.

There is an amendment to the scale of the development proposed. The number of 2 bed units have been reduced and there are now 20 No. 1 bed

units and 4 No. 2 bed units in the scheme. There are 4 parking spaces on the site, and these will be for the two bed units.

The potential fallback position has been mentioned with the site capable of being used as a number of different uses under 'Use Class E' without the need for planning permission and these uses would generate parking demand. Clearly, there is a potential for a commercial use of the site, but as discussed earlier, it is considered that a residential use is more likely if the building is to be retained.

In lieu of the parking provision on the site the applicant has considered improving the sustainable travel modes to the site for residents. There are 34 cycle spaces provided in the building and 4 cycle spaces in the courtyard. Each of the residents would receive a residential travel pack that would include £500 vouchers for cycle purchase and £620 public transport vouchers to be used on bus or train services.

Alma Mill has been vacant for some time and if it is to be retained then it has to be accepted that there will be parking demand for on-street parking resulting from the development. The number of 1 bed units has now increased on plan, however, the layout still reflects the original layout with a living room replacing the former bedroom on the plans. It is likely these rooms would then be converted back to a bedroom, resulting in over half of the apartments benefitting from two bedrooms.

It is accepted that the site is well located in regard to local facilities and public transport and that some residents may not need the use of a car. However, there is existing on-street parking issues that occurs on Crompton Road on both sides of the road and this proposal has the potential to increase the demand for parking in the same areas on Crompton Road.

Overall, it is considered that the development potentially has a high number of apartments, half of which could be 2 bed units which normally require 2 parking spaces and would in fact generate parking demand for the units. Given that there is already significant on street parking in the vicinity of the site this proposal would likely increase the demand for on-street parking affecting the safe free of traffic and as such warrants an objection. On this basis, the scheme is contrary to Appendix C of the CELPS and Policy SD 1.

Ecology

The application is supported by ecology surveys. No evidence of roosting bats was recorded during the submitted survey and Alma Mill has only low potential to support a roost. The Council's Nature Conservation Officer therefore advises that roosting bats are not reasonable likely to be present or affected by the proposed development. Subject to conditions relating to nesting birds and incorporation of features to enhance the biodiversity value of the proposed development, the proposal is deemed to adhere with Policy SE 3 of the CELPS and saved Policy NE.11 of the MBLP.

Affordable Housing:

Cheshire East's adopted policy on affordable housing is set out in CELPS Policy SC 5 and in the Council's Interim Planning Statement: Affordable Housing (IPS).

The policies state that in Settlements with a population of 3,000 or more that we will negotiate for the provision of an appropriate element of the total dwelling provision to be for affordable housing on all unidentified 'windfall' sites of 15 dwellings or more or larger than 0.4 hectares in size.

The affordable housing requirements for new development which is triggered by the above will be a minimum of 30%, in accordance with the recommendations of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment carried out in 2013.

This percentage relates to the provision of both social rented and/or intermediate housing, as appropriate. Normally the Council would expect a ratio of 65/35 between social rented and intermediate housing.

This is a proposed development of 24 dwellings therefore in order to meet the Council's Policy on Affordable Housing there is a requirement for 7 dwellings to be provided as affordable dwellings. Of the 7 Affordable units, 5 units should be provided as Affordable Rent and 2 units as Intermediate Tenure. No affordable housing is proposed as part of the application proposals.

Point 7 of policy SC 5 states: *"In exceptional circumstances, where scheme viability may be affected, developers will be expected to provide viability assessments to demonstrate alternative affordable housing provision. The developer will be required to submit an open book viability assessment. In such cases, the council will commission an independent review of the viability study, for which the developer will bear the cost."*

Viability Assessments are a process of assessing whether a site is financially viable, by looking at whether the value generated by a development is more than the cost of developing it.

The weight to be given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case.

The application is supported by a viability appraisal. This concludes that the cost of the works required by the planning application compared to the predicted profits (albeit for an allowable small profit), mean that financially, there is no money left to provide affordable housing or the required financial contributions towards education or open space.

The submitted Viability Assessment has been independently assessed by Savill's (*independent surveyors and property consultants*) and they have reviewed the submitted key viability inputs and their reasonableness. Savill's agree that the application proposals could not sustain development

contributions or on-site affordable housing provision. It needs to realise its full market value in providing 24 flats in order to financially justify the works. Any token financial offer by the applicant would reduce their 15% profit margin (which is reasonable) and make the building works unattractive to the construction market. This has been independently verified and thus the proposal cannot offer the requisite planning obligations.

Education:

Cheshire East's adopted policy on education contributions is set out in CELPS Policy IN 1 and IN 2 and in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update.

The development of 24 dwellings, 12 are eligible and is expected to generate:

- 2 primary children (12 x 0.19)
- 2 secondary children (12 x 0.15)
- 0 SEN children (34 x 0.51 x 0.023%)

The Council's Children's Services Department have stated that the development is expected to impact on secondary school places in the immediate locality. Contributions which have been negotiated on other developments are factored into the forecasts both in terms of the increased pupil numbers and the increased capacity at schools in the area as a result of agreed financial contributions. The analysis undertaken has identified that a shortfall of school places still remains, but only at secondary level.

To alleviate forecast pressures upon local secondary schools, an education contribution totalling £32,685 would be required.

No Education contribution is being proposed as part of the application proposals on the basis of viability. This has been independently verified and thus the proposal cannot offer the requisite planning obligations.

Open Space

General

The site is too constricted to allow the provision of on-site open space. In the absence of on-site provision, the development should contribute to off-site provision.

CELPS Policy SE 6 and MBLP Policies RT5 and DC40 set out the Council's adopted standards for open space and play provision. The mechanisms for delivery are expanded upon with the Supplementary Planning Guidance, which expects off-site provision to be funded by means of a planning obligation.

The key issue remains one of necessity to make proposed development acceptable in planning terms. The addition of 24 dwellings would clearly

impose an additional demand for open space and play provision, the relevant amounts being quantified as follows: -

- Public Open Space (POS) play and amenity contributions are required at a rate of £1,500 per bed space. This contribution would amount to £42,000.
- Recreation Open Space (ROS) contributions are required at a rate of £500 per 2+ bed space apartment. This contribution would amount to £2,000.

No financial contribution towards Open Space is proposed by the applicant owing to viability. This has been independently verified and thus the proposal cannot offer the requisite planning obligations.

Other Material Considerations:

Economic Benefits:

The benefits of the scheme also include investment in the local economy and the creation of jobs during the construction phase, increased support for local shops and businesses by the future occupants of the development and the provision of inexpensive market houses in a sustainable location. The scheme would generate Council Tax income, which could provide a source of revenue funding for the local authority in delivering services as well as investing in the locality. However, in this case, it is not considered that the social and environmental harm identified would outweigh this benefit.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION

Alma Mill is a Grade II Listed Building which has been vacant for a long period of time and is in a very poor state of repair. It is accepted that, in order to carry out residential conversion, significant works are required, which would be extremely costly.

The principle of the development is accepted and an alternative use other than employment has been justified. Furthermore, it is considered that there is a real public benefit in facilitating the long-term future of Alma Mill. This is given substantial weight in support of the scheme.

However, the harm caused by failing to provide suitable mitigation for affordable housing, education and open space is given substantial weight against the scheme. The lower parking provision and negative impact on neighbouring living conditions are also given significant weight against the scheme.

The harm to the listed building, setting of the adjacent listed building and the character of the area are given significant weight against the scheme also.

It is considered that the substantial benefit of bringing the listed building into use, (after such a considerable amount of time) thereby helping to sustain its future, is outweighed by the negative impacts of the scheme, namely the lack of developer contributions, limited parking provision, impact on neighbouring living conditions and harm to the listed building, setting of the adjacent listed building and character of the area, on this occasion.

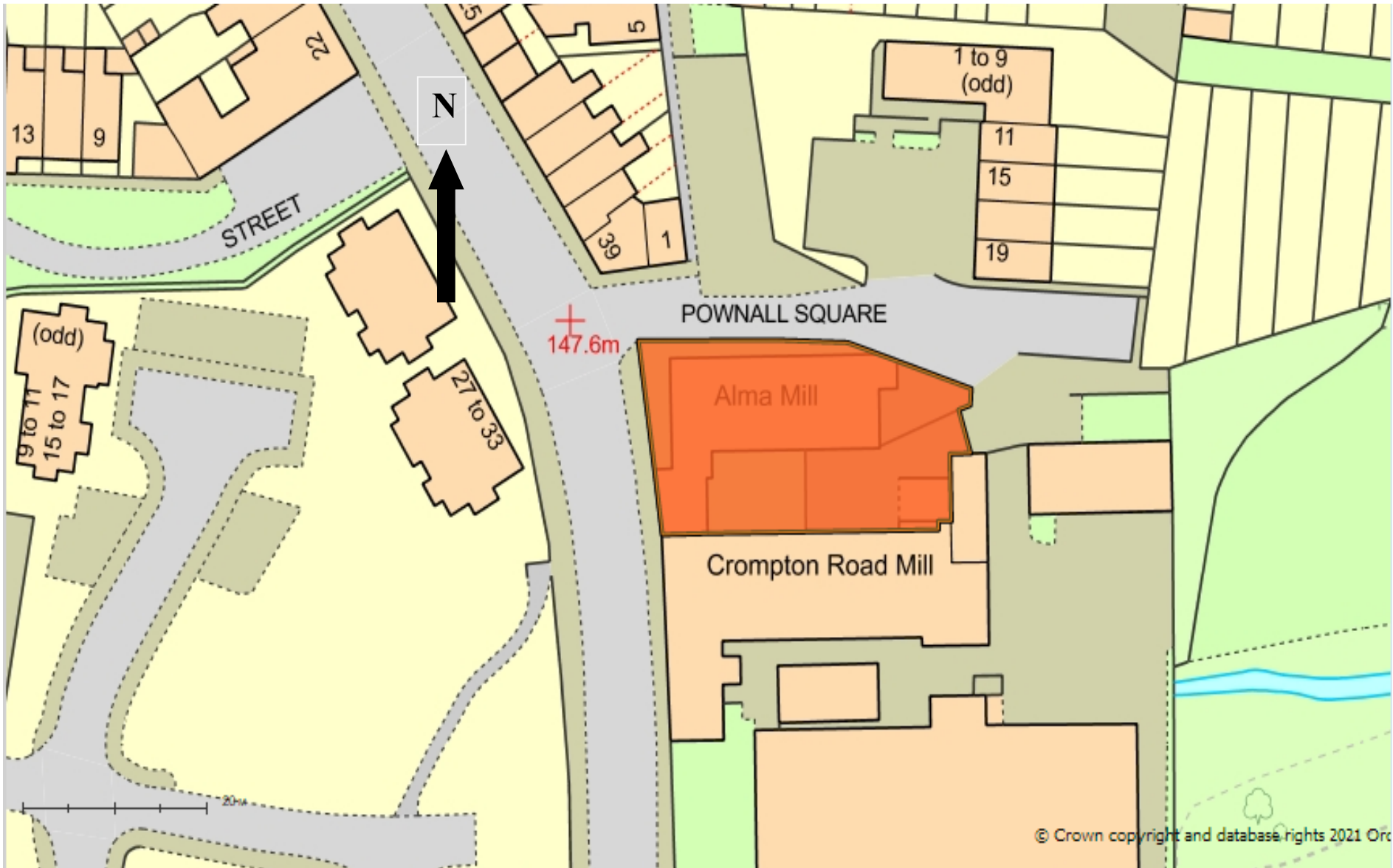
Having taken account of all matters raised, the scheme is contrary to the relevant Development Plan Policies for the reasons set out above and it is recommended that this application is refused.

RECOMMENDATION:

REFUSE for the following reason(s):

1. The proposal is contrary to saved Policies BE15, BE17, BE18 and BE19 in the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan and Policies SD 2, SE 1 SE 7 of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy, causing harm to the objectives of those policies due to an adverse impact on the character, appearance and historic interest of the building and setting of the adjacent listed building by reason of its height, scale and form. The proposal is similarly contrary to national planning policy and guidance relating to listed buildings.
2. The proposed extensions would cause loss of light and an overbearing impact to the detriment of the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential property, particularly numbers 39 Crompton Road and 1 Pownall Square. The approval of the development would therefore be contrary to saved Policies DC3 and DC38 of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan and Policy SE 1 of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy.
3. The development would be detrimental to the interests of highway safety through an increase in parking taking place in unsuitable locations on the highway or within the site, taking account of the nature of the proposed development, the location of the site and the predicted number of parked vehicles arising from the development contrary to saved Policy DC6 of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan, Appendix C and Policy SD 1 of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy.

In order to give proper effect to the Northern Committee's intent and without changing the substance of its decision, authority is delegated to the Head of Planning in consultation with the Chair (or in their absence the Vice Chair) to correct any technical slip or omission in the resolution, before issue of the decision notice.



N

STREET

147.6m

POWNALL SQUARE

Alma Mill

Crompton Road Mill

1 to 9 (odd)

11

15

19

13

9

22

5

5

39

1

9 to 11 (odd)
15 to 17

27 to 33

20m

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